

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:581

ANSWERED ON:30.04.2003

INVOLVEMENT OF GRAM PANCHAYATS IN FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMME

ANANTA NAYAK;AVSM, BRIG.(RETD.) KAMAKHYA PRASAD SINGH DEO

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to involve Gram Panchayats and other local Government bodies in Family Planning Programme;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the State Governments have been directed by the Centre to entrust such responsibility to the Gram Panchayats;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the response of the State Governments thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a)to(e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 581 FOR 30.4.2003

(a) & (b): The National Population Policy, 2000, recognizes the Panchayati Raj Institutions as an important means of furthering decentralized planning and program implementation for population stabilisation. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, 1992, have already made Health, FW and Education, a responsibility of Village Panchayats.

Under the IXth Five Year Plan, the following schemes were implemented through the PRIs under the National FW Program:

- (i) The National Maternity Benefit Scheme for providing cash assistance of Rs.500/- to pregnant women in Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.
- (ii) The Referral Transport Scheme for assisting women from indigent families in 25% of the Sub-centres in select states for transportation to a referral unit during emergency.
- (iii) Village level planning being undertaken by ANMs, under Community Needs Assessment Approach, which involves rural communities.
- (iv) Preparation of District IEC Plan, through the Zila Saksharata Samiti.
- (v) Under some area projects implemented in States, the task of construction of buildings was entrusted to the local PRI bodies.
- (vi) The Mahila Swasthya Sanghs and the Village Self-Help Groups were used to propagate agenda of family welfare in the villages. Although, these bodies do not strictly come within the system of PRIs, however, vigilant and active members of the village are often represented both on PRIs and in such bodies.
- (vii) Trainings were organized for members of the PRIs, especially the women representatives, to sensitize and enlighten them about the RCH programme, and their role in it.

A new Community Incentive Scheme is being conceptualized to increase the involvement of members of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Family Welfare program, for the 10th Five Year Plan.

(c) to (e) Necessary instructions have been given to the States/UTs, for involving Panchayati Raj Institutions for the implementation of National Maternity Benefit Scheme, Referral Transport Scheme and Community Needs Assessment Approach. A National Consultative Workshop was organized at NIHF, on 3rd/4th February, 2003, on the 'Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies in Health and Family Welfare Program'. Representatives from the States of Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, attended the Workshop. The Department of Family Welfare is publishing a Handbook containing information on the primary healthcare system in rural areas and on various reproductive and healthcare programs, which shall be distributed to Panchayat Heads at village/block/district levels in the eight

Empowered Action Group States of Bihar, Jharkhand, U.P., Uttaranchal, M.P., Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Orissa.

The State Governments are involving the PRIs in the Family Welfare Programme in varying degrees. The Government of Kerala has transferred funds, functions and functionaries to the PRIs under the model of decentralised planning. Other states like Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Haryana and Orissa are also making efforts to involve the PRIs in Family Welfare Programme to increase the acceptability and the effectiveness of the programme.